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ACTIVE OPPOSITION KEEPS GOVERNMENT ON DEFENSIVE

Caustic Comment Stings But Laurier and His Colleagues Quibble Over Explanations Demanded—Block Investigation into Public Accounts.—Algoma Member's Effective Speech.—Hot Shot For Pugsley.—The Vannutelli Affair.

(From our own correspondent.)

Ottawa, Dec. 5.—Room for Sir Wilfrid Laurier! Behold the Great Explainer step to the front and do his explaining.

Do you remember the matter of the "homage" telegfam sent by the Administrator of Canada to Cardinal Vannutelli last August? Well, as the late John Henry Pope said on a famous occasion, there's nothing to it. We have no official proof that there was a telegram. Mr. Justice Girouard wasn't Administrator just then. Nothing to it.

For it seems first, that Sir Wilfrid Laurier wrote to Mr. Justice Girouard and asked him about it. Mr. Justice Girouard wouldn't tell. Naughty Mr. Justice Girouard!

And then it further seems that Mr. Justice Girouard wasn't sworn as Administrator until September 5; and the telegram was sent during August, and that therefore the Justice was not the Administrator. True, His Excellency had appointed Judge Girouard Deputy Governor (which means the same thing) on August 1. True, His Excellency left Norway House on August 7 for the shores of Hudson Bay and was from that time completely out of reach of Ottawa. But these things count for nothing. The Dominion had no Administrator at all during August.

It was Dr. Sproule who asked the question. He asked:

1. By what authority or under what commission was Mr. Justice Girouard appointed to act as Deputy Governor, or administrator of the Government, during the absence of His Excellency the Governor General, last summer and fall?

2. What powers were conferred upon him by any such commission?

3. Did he as such administrator send a telegram or message to Cardinal Vannutelli, the Papal Legate, on the latter's arrival in Canada? If so, what were the contents of such message or telegram?

4. In sending such message or telegram did he act upon the advice of his Constitutional Adviser?

Sir Wilfrid Laurier first explained that the Letters Patent constituting the office of Governor General provide for the appointment of His Excellency's absence of an Administrator, usually the Chief Justice of Canada, but in his absence the next senior judge of the Supreme Court. He answered questions 3 and 4 as follows:

"When the present question of the honorable member for East Grey (Dr. Sproule) appeared in the Votes and Proceedings of the 21st November last, Mr. Justice Girouard's attention was called to it with the view of obtaining from him the information asked for. He has failed to do so.

"The facts appear to be as follows: On the 7th September, the following marconigram was published in the Montreal newspapers as having been sent to Cardinal Vannutelli by Mr. Justice Girouard:

Tadousac, Aout, 1910.

A son excellence le Legat Papal,
Administratour gouvernement de Canada presente ses homages a son sur le bateau.

Excellence et lui souchaite le bienvenue.

GIROUARD.

"Which I would translate as follows:

Tadousac, August 1910.

To his Excellency the Papal Legate,
On board steamer.

The administrator of the government of Canada presents his respects to His Excellency and bids him welcome.

GIROUARD.

"On the face of it, this marconigram was sent during the month of August. During that month Mr. Justice Girouard did not act in the capacity of administrator, as, during the whole of August, His Excellency was in Canada, but, on the 1st of August, His Excellency the Governor General, before leaving for his trip to the Hudson Bay, appointed Mr. Justice Girouard deputy governor. Mr. Justce Girouard did not consult the ministers of the Crown and received no advices from any of them."

So that about the only thing not explained away is the pleasure the receiving of the message gave Cardinal Vannutelli.

More about the Cardinal. Dr. Sproule asked:

1. On what State or other occasions, if any, is it proper for the Honourable, the Speaker of the House of Commons or Senate, to wear his official robes or apparel outside the precincts of Parliament during the recess or when Parliament is prorogued?

2. On all such occasions when he attends any functions or gathering in that capacity, should he not be accompanied by the Sergeant-at-Arms with the Mace—who precedes him as the emblem of the authority of the House?

3. Did the Honourable, the Speaker of this House, appear attired in his robes of office in any procession or on any occasion since the prorogation in May last? If so, in what procession and on what occasion did he so appear?

Are there any precedents for his conduct in wearing his official robes of office in such procession, on such occasion?

Sir Wilfrid Laurier replied. There is no rule or practice of the House of Commons which governs the wearing of his official robes by the Speaker during recess; he can, however, be accompanied by the Mace only when Parliament is in session or when specially authorized to do so by the House of Commons. Then further;

"The Government is informed by His Honour the Speaker that he did take part in a solemn religious procession in September last in the city of Montreal, but that he did not do so in his official capacity and was not accompanied by the Mace, which is the emblem of his office. The Government is not aware of any precedents in the matter, although there may have been occasions when Speakers of Canadian legislatures have under similar circumstances in the past attended such celebrations. On such occasions, it is customary in the Province of Quebec for judges of the higher courts to appear in their official costumes and His Honour the Speaker, holding rank as a magistrate, informs the government that on the occasion above referred to he appeared similarly attired as a mark of respect for the solemnity of the occasion."

A question by Dr. Sproule as to guards of honor elicited the information from Sir Frederick Borden that such marks of distinction are authorized, in addition to the customary occasions "if deemed expedient to receive distinguished personages." He added: "The 65th Regiment did parade at the Eucharistic Congress during the carrying of the Host and were equipped with rifles and bayonets. They paraded voluntarily under the authority of the commanding officer of the regiment, Lt.-Col. A. E. D. Labelle. In this connection it might be stated that it has been customary for many years past in Montreal, Quebec and elsewhere for French-Canadian regiments of the militia to attend the feast of Corpus Christi and parade with arms."

Yet another question on the subject. In September an order was issued from the office of the District Officer Commanding in Montreal giving instructions as to the uniform to be worn by officers at the civic reception to Cardinal Vannutelli. Sir Frederick Borden replied that the order had been issued under the following circumstances:

1. An invitation for the officers of the Montreal Garrison to attend the Civic Reception at the City Hall, on 8th September had been received from the civic authorities, and it was publicly announced that His Worship the Mayor desired all citizens attending to appear in evening dress.

2. Under para. 1305, K. R. & O., 1910 and para. 1710, table A. (h) K. R. & O. for the Army, 1908, it is provided that officers attending public ceremonies and receptions should appear in full dress.

3. It has been customary for many years past, for the officers of the militia at Montreal, to attend in uniform at all important civic functions and public receptions, such as the inauguration of a new City Council, public charity balls, St. Andrew's Annual Ball, etc., etc., for which similar instructions as to the dress of those desiring to attend, now the subject of enquiry, have been issued.

4. The officers were not ordered to attend the reception, but simply informed of the proper dress for such an occasion, should they desire to be present and appear in uniform.

There was an interesting statement as to the Manitoba boundaries. Mr. Staples brought out Sir Wilfrid Laurier's version of the recent negotiations between the two premiers. Speaking at Winnipeg on July 12 Sir Wilfrid Laurier expressed his desire to have Mr. Roblin come to Ottawa to discuss the matter. As soon as Sir Wilfrid Laurier returned to Ottawa Mr. Roblin wrote him under date of October 17, taking the matter up. Mr. Roblin reminded his distinguished correspondent that his letter of January 8, 1910, remained unanswered, but expressed his willingness to go to Ottawa and confer, on any date whatever. "Surely," he wrote, "the time has now arrived when you should be in a position to state what terms you are prepared to recommend to your Parliament for acceptance." Further, Mr. Roblin suggested that if Sir Wilfrid Laurier agreed the two proposals, his own and that of the Dominion Premier, should be submitted directly to the people of Manitoba, on the principle of the referendum. On October 22 Sir Wilfrid Laurier wrote professing willingness to meet Mr. Roblin, but nothing to date. On October 27 Mr. Roblin wrote that he would visit Ottawa soon. On Nov. 25 he was in Ottawa and had an interview with Sir Wilfrid Laurier. At that interview Sir Wilfrid Laurier asked Mr. Roblin to wait till Mr. Fielding's return to Ottawa.

The blame? that is all Mr. Roblin's. Sir Wilfrid Laurier had offered to discuss the extension question on the terms of the resolution passed in July, 1908.

Col. Hughes found that no official invitation to the Coronation had been received; so that the matter of sending the cadets and R. M. C. lads has not been taken up.

For the rest the House spent a happy afternoon with the shy and submissive oyster. Mr. Warburton moved for papers connected with the subject and discussed at length the manners, customs, habits, opinions, tastes, characteristics, prejudices and culture of that reticent creature. Especially the culture; also the conservation. He got the papers after a supporting statement from Mr. Fraser and a stonewall by Mr. Brodeur. There is a legal point involved; it is not quite clear who owns the oyster grounds.

Now if it were prairie oysters there would be no uncertainty at all. The Dominion would own them.

Public Accounts Committee

Ottawa, Dec. 6.—The lid stays on. The work of the public accounts committee is to be done under conditions as onerous as technical rules can make them. The House of Commons willed it so today, at the bidding of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Pugsley. Vote, 98 to 73; majority 25. A very low majority, nearly a record, in fact. Much annoyance on the part of the Premier at its lowness.

The most discreditable thing about the Parliament Buildings is the Railway Committee of the House of Commons. Next to it in point of dishonour stands the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons. In theory the Public Accounts Committee is a sort of Audit Board, which looks into the details of public expenditure. In practice it is a bear-garden dominated by E. M. Macdonald, Mr. F. B. Carvell and the others of the Blocker's Brigade, egged on by the Minister who wishes to protect his department from scrutiny. Of late that minister usually has been Mr. Pugsley. There are 82 members entitled to sit on it. The number of those who attend it regularly is far smaller; but when those who are conversant with the matter under discussion push their differences to a vote the non-attending members rush in and give a party vote. Any man who wishes to despise the Canadian Parliament should visit the Public Accounts committee.

One of the technicalities which is of great value to the blockers is this; that the House refers to the Committee the accounts of the year last past; and of that year alone. Few transactions are completed in the Accounts in one year; to make the investigations complete the developments of earlier years often must be scrutinized; and the moment that is attempted the ever-ready blocker objects that the transactions of the earlier year are beyond the scope of the work of the committee.

Today Mr. Lennox moved that the accounts for the two years last past be referred to the Committee. The Government objected, and after a debate which lasted all afternoon voted down Mr. Lennox' motion. The Liberals did not seem to like the subject much. It was noticeable that Mr. E. M. Macdonald quitted the House soon after the discussion began; he returned, however, in time to vote and when the division bells rang there was a small attendance of Liberals and a full one of Conservatives. Sir Wilfrid Laurier seemed very much annoyed.

In moving his motion Mr. Lennox called attention to the way in which the British Parliament does this branch of its work. It appoints a small committee and a member of the Opposition always acts as Chairman; its investigations are untramelled and there is no blocking. Dealing by anticipation with the reply that the present system prevailed before 1896 Mr. Lennox observed, first, that a system which sufficed for an expenditure of forty millions will not do for an expenditure of one hundred and forty millions; secondly, that the spirit in which the committee is worked is different, as prior to 1896 there was no blocking and facilities were granted for investigations. He depicted the system of premeditated and organized opposition to investigation which has characterized the last 10 years.

One objection which the government might make was that the Opposition could come to the House when occasion arose and obtained the additional powers. This was illusionary, the rules prevented this. The Houes could not discuss the matter unless the committee reported; and the Liberals on the Committee took care that no report was made until the matter was disposed of. Then, as the investigation had been closed, there would be nothing for the House to deal with. Again, attention seldom was drawn to a questionable transaction until it was in its second or third year. The government had built a wall higher than Haman's Gallows, thicker and stronger than those of the Laurier Tower, and behind that wall cowered Leopold, Lazerus, the North Atlantic Trading Company, the Robins Irrigation Company, the Adamsons, the Burrowses, the Pearsons, the Lodges, the McAvitys—Mr. Lennox' list was longer still.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that Mr. Lennox complained that the Public Accounts Committee was unable to scrutinize the expenditures of one year—and his remedy was to give it the expenditures of two years. He admitted that the Public Acounts Committee was unsatisfactory and that in particular its numbers should be reduced; but he held that the time to reduce its numbers was after a general election. The present arrangement had obtained since Confederation. He suggested that the House might authorize the investigation of specific transactions through a period of years.

After this exiguous defence Sir Wilfrid Laurier moved an amendment, that whenever the Public Accounts Committee reports that an entire transaction should be examined, the House would receive the recommendation favorably.

Mr. W. R. Smith of Algoma made an uncommonly effective speech. He was a member of the Public Accounts Committee, he said. He was a business man. He was much disappointed with its procedure. He had thought that he was coming to Ottawa as a director in the concern of which the shareholders were the people of Canada and of which the Premier was president. Instead, he found arrayed in that committee a set of eminent lawyers blocking investigation; while close to the chairman sat a Minister, such as Mr. Pugsley, ready to give the wink to some one of the eminent lawyers when to raise some technical objection. Why should the Government place those lawyers in the committee and raise technical objections? What had the Government behind? If all had been honest it could have nothing to hide. More than that—the Premier and his Ministers, as the responsible parties, were guilty of making poor fellows who came before the committee perjure themselves; some were men bamboozled by the cross-examination until they were afraid to open their mouths; some were civil servants whose bread and butter depended on the answers they gave. Let the laymen on the committee have a chance to get the truth out. If Sir Wilfrid Laurier wanted to have the proceedings a Donnybrook Fair, the Opposition would have to fight the matter out. But they would rather do their work without unseemly wrangle. He had been a member of the Ontario legislature and even in the worst days of that legislature, when the Ross Government was declining to its fall, its public accounts committee "was a prince" compared to the Dominion one. In that committee they could go back to the beginning of a transaction.

Mr. A. H. Clarke, who has been chairman of the committee in question, argued that Mr. Lennox' motion would not remove the difficulties of which the Opposition complained. The committee's work would be doubled by giving it the accounts for two years. If a given transaction came up, the committee could go back two or three years to the genesis of that transaction.

Mr. Haggart said that in former years the committee was not bound by this technicality.

Mr. Blain gave a new turn to the debate by dwelling on the government's fondness for dealing with middlemen, as instanced by its dealing with Merwin, by its sub-target gun and many other cases. This, after some further discussion, brought Mr. Pugsley into the debate. The Minister of Public Works vowed that no middlemen are employed in his department.

What about the sawdust wharf?

Mr. Pugsley declared that the $5,000 paid for that wharf was fair and reasonable, and that the man who sold it had owned it; there had been no rake-off.

Mr. C. L. Owen brought up the Lymburner purchase of belting. Mr. Pugsley tried to defend this, and so Mr. Rhodes put on record the evidence. Briefly some belting was bought, under the plea that it was a rush order. A middleman was paid $831; a competent authority swore that the government or any other purchaser could have got it for $293; so that the rake-off was $538.

Dr. Reid added the dredging contract in New Brunswick. For example, John D. Moore, president of the St. John Telegraph, was given a dredging contract at 90 cents a cubic yard; and the difference between 30 cents a yard and 90 cents went to buy the Telegraph. George McAvity, of St. John, a recognized middleman, was getting contracts at his own prices from Mr. Pugsley.

Mr. Borden pointed out that the thing which Mr. Lennox was contending for had been done in earlier years, and as late as three years ago. The Public Accounts Committee had little enough time to do its work without being hampered by technicalities. A consideration was that last year the committee devoted itself almost wholly to the Public Works Department; it had left that of Marine and Fisheries alone because of Mr. Brodeur's illness, and had hardly touched the Printing Bureau, which had been shown to be in a very bad condition. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's amendment would actually limit the existing powers of the committee.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier admitted that the Lymburner case was impressive.

After Mr. Loggie had defended Mr. Moore's 90-cent dredging rate, the vote was called and resulted as already stated.

In the evening Mr. Pugsley put through his resolution providing $75,000 a year for the expenses of the International Joint Waterways Commission.

Major J. A. Currie introduced his pure foods bill of last session. This proposes the fixing of standards and drafting of regulations to a Commission of 15 members, 12 of whom are to be university professors. The bill places cold storage warehouses under this commission and obliges them to give monthly sworn statements of the articles they hold in storage and the length of time these articles have been in storage.

Table of Precedence.

Ottawa, Dec. 7.—The official table of procedure, ever full of pitfalls, today caused a small debate which embalmed a great error. Speaking in his haste Sir Wilfrid Laurier committed himself to the astounding assertion that the Methodist Church had not a head.

Oh, Doctor Carman, Doctor Carman, what do you think of that? Surprise, not unmixed with awe, rested upon the House. Such a statement, after these many years of dominance by the Old Lion of the General Conference! Such a statement, after these uncounted echoing roars from the fiercest of front-rank controversialists in Canada!

Dr. Sproule brought the subject up, in the traditional manner, by moving for papers. There is an annual news despatch which goes out from Ottawa. The day after the Drawing Room it is noted that all the Consuls General absent themselves because of the lack of recognition of their official status; this ignoring of their diplomatic rank is an Imperial matter, being prescribed by the Colonial Office. In addition, there usually is trouble over the clergy; this year, it seems, the Roman Catholic Vicar General of Ottawa was invited to the State Dinner, while three acknowledged local leaders of their denominations, Rev. Dr. Herridge (Presbyterian), Rev. Dr. Henderson (Methodist) and Rev. Dr. Cameron (Baptist), stayed at home. What about these discriminations? Dr. Sproule asked.

Dealing with the case of the Consuls General, Sir Wilfrid Laurier agreed that it called for a change. It was another example of the way in which the British Empire is outgrowing old established forms. In theory these gentlemen have no diplomatic functions. In practice they actually do discharge diplomatic duties, and there seemed need for some recognition of the fact. It is a matter for the Imperial authorities.

With reference to the clerical matter, Sir Wilfrid Laurier explained that the Vicar General of Ottawa was at the time acting as bishop. As for the other clergymen, he was sure that the proper authorities of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist churches had been invited; they had been invited for some years. "The head of the Methodist body—if the Methodist body can be said to have a head—"

Sensation in the House.

Later Mr. George Taylor asked for an explanation. The Premier replied that he had always understood that the Methodists were a democratic body. He knew Dr. Carman, who was a very good friend of his, and had sat by him at state dinners. He understood that there formerly were bishops in the Methodist body, but that it now had none and that they elected a chairman to preside over their deliberations.

Anyway, it was not a matter on which His Excellency took the advice of his ministers. Indeed, Lord Grey has effected some reforms in the table of precedence.

Col. Sam Hughes after explaining the Methodist system of church government expressed the opinion that Rev. Dr. Henderson, in that he is chairman of the Ottawa district, occupies a more important position than does the Vicar-General of the Roman Catholic arch-diocese of Ottawa.

In the course of the afternoon Mr. Monk moved for a return of the naval officers employed by the Government, his purpose being to bring up the energetic reply which Commander Roper R. N. made last summer to certain criticisms of the Canadian Navy. Mr. Monk contended that Commander Roper had committed a considerable indiscretion, and had spoken much too freely. In particular, Mr. Monk objected to Commander Roper's description of his utterances as the "imaginative vaporings of a pessimistic soul."

Mr. Brodeur contended that Mr. Monk had attacked Commander Roper, who had defended himself. Mr. Monk replied that he had not assailed Commander Roper, of whose existence he had not been aware. Mr. Brodeur replied that Mr. Monk had attacked his technical officers and that Commander Roper as head of the technical staff had taken it to himself. He added that Commander Roper was an excellent officer and that he had held an important staff position under Lord Charles Beresford.

Col. Hughes asked if Mr. Brodeur had authorized Commander Roper's speech.

Mr. Brodeur replied in the negative.

Mr. Borden said that he had been present when Commander Roper made the speech of which Mr. Monk complained. He thought that considerable allowance should be made for the fact that Commander Roper was a stranger to the country, but he went into controversial matters. He had heard himself described as one of "a faction." The observations which Commander Roper made were somewhat acrid. The Minister should give his naval officers to understand that they should not discuss controversial matters.

Mr. Foster agreed that Mr. Brodeur had taken a dangerous line of arguing that a civil servant could make speeches in reply to the criticisms of a Member of Parliament. Such a rule would be intolerable. In point of fact, Mr. Brodeur was hiding behind his officers.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier agreed that conditions would be intolerable if public servants were to be given liberty to make speeches in reply to criticisms. If an officer were attacked his course was to go to his Minister and ask to be defended. Commander Roper was a stranger to Canada and had felt his honor at stake. He was an estimable and most competent officer. He agreed that he had gone out of his way in making that attack.

Mr. Foster and Col. Hughes repeated that it was Mr. Brodeur who was to blame, Col. Hughes arguing that Commander Roper must have been put up to make the speech.

Mr. Speaker Marcil (Bonaventure, $125 per head) continues to add to the gayety of the House. The expenditures for furnishing his quarters contain some odd items. For example, a variety of objects, such as a basket of flowers $8, a pipe case $7, a jardiniere $5, etc., amounting in all to $68.85, were bought in November 1909 at a Tombola given by the Sacred Heart Church in Ottawa. Col. Hughes asked about it and found that this sum had been charged to the Sergeant-at-Arms estimates of $54,402. "The Government is informed by Mr. Speaker," Sir Wilfrid Laurier said, "that these articles were bought at a bazaar of the Sacred Heart Church, on the 24th November, 1909, by the authority of Mr. Speaker, and paid by cheques of the accountant of the House of Commons during the months of November and December, 1909. These articles are now in Mr. Speaker's rooms."

Again, there is an item in the Auditor-General's report showing that $101 was paid for seven months' piano rent, cartage, etc. Mr. Taylor was told that "this expense was incurred in connection with Mr. Speaker's rooms." The practice has been to rent a piano for Mr. Speaker, not to buy one. Since 1896 the sum of $1,706 has been paid in piano rent.

Mr. Taylor: That would have bought two or three pianos.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier: It might. That is the result of following bad precedents."

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker bought two stuffed birds for $12 and these birds are now in his rooms. And again, he had bought without tender, furniture, etc., amounting to $1,624 and wine glasses, etc., amounting to $682. Also a gramophone, records etc., costing the country $317.

Does Senator James McMullen's astral self ever wander over to our side of the building from the peaceful shadows of the Red Chamber?

Two second readings occupied some of the time of the House. Mr. Lancaster had one to compel the holding of an inquest whenever a fatal accident occurs on a railway. Mr. Aylesworth held that this conflicted with provincial jurisdiction, and after some discussion the second reading stood over. Mr. Miller's bill to amend the Interest Act by reducing the notice for paying an instalment of a mortgage in three instead of six months interest was opposed by the Government but was carried on a division being called by 87 to 24; Mr. Borden voted with the Government, but the mass of the members favored the measure.

New Record for Height.

Pau, France, Dec. 12.—Ascending from the aviation field here, M. Leganeux broke the world's record, rising 10,499 feet. The Frenchmen landed half frozen after a remarkable drop. He used a Bleriot monoplane.

VICTIMS OF CONSUMPTION.

MOTHER AND TWO CHILDREN AT MUSKOKA FREE HOSPITAL.

Are Now Under Treatment—Husband, Too, Had Been a Patient—A Tragedy in Real Life—Heavy Debt on Institution.

A story from the Muskoka Free Hospital for Consumptives tells of a mother who, with her two children, is now under treatment in that institution. The husband had been a patient, but the case was an advanced one when the patient entered, and he has since passed away. There is little doubt but that the wife was infected as a result of caring for her husband, and now she is in the Muskoka Hospital. Her little girl, about five years of age, and a boy of ten are with her, both being afflicted with this dread disease.

The words of the mother are pathetic. She writes: "I went to a doctor and got him to examine my lungs to see whether there was anything wrong with them, and he said that the right lung was affected. A little rest, he hoped, would build me up. I have a little girl, about five years old, and the doctor says that if I could take her up with me it would do her ever so much good, as she is not very strong. I have three more children, and one of these, a boy of ten, seems also to be afflicted, and it is advisable that he should enter the hospital."

These three are of the 104 patients who are residents in this deserving institution and being cared for without money and without price. The sorry part of it is that the trustees are carrying a debt of something like $40,000, incurred largely through the additions that have been made within the past year, and that have more than doubled the accommodation of the institution, together with the heavy cost of maintaining so large a number of free patients.

Readers who desire to help this great charity may send their contributions to Mr. W. J. Gage, Chairman Executive Committee, 84 Spadina avenue, or to the Secretary-Treasurer, 347 King street west, Toronto.

The Muskoka Free Hospital has ever lived up to its claims of never having refused a single patient because of his or her poverty.

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HOT ROAST FOR LAURIER.

Canadian Premier Condemned for Supporting O'Connor's Party.

Canadian subscriptions to the Irish parliamentary fund continue to excite much controversy. Arnold White, one of England's twelve foremost publicists, whose front page article signed Vanoc is a leading feature of the Referee, says: "When we are told Laurier has given dollars to O'Connor, it is fair to inquire what Sir Wilfrid's interference with out domestic politics is supposed to prove. Why does he not mind his own business?

"If an English Prime Minister were to interfere in Canadian racial politics he would be scorched with the blaze of an angry protest. Lord Sackville, our ambassador, was hooted out of Washington for writing a private letter not for publication. Why should we English be interfered with in a struggle with subsidized disloyalty by the leader of the French-Canadians? This is life and death to England. Canada does not contribute a farthing to the civil list of the King. Canada leaves to the people of England its privilege of paying ninety-one per cent. of the cost of the Empire. Let Laurier remember the fate of those who in quarrels interpose. We know our business better than to abandon Ulster. If the Parliament bill passes, and Home Rule is granted, then comes the Socialist programme for England on top of civil war in Ireland."

No Word From Macoun.

Ottawa, Dec. 12.—No word has been received in the city from James Macoun, of the geological survey, who left early in the year for the Hudson Bay district and it thought possible that the cruiser on which his party sailed from Fort Churchill is ice-bound in northern waters. Mr. Macoun was to have returned to the city early last month. Days went by and there was neither appearance nor word of the missing geologist. "Is there any intention of sending out an expedition to search for Mr. Macoun's party," an officer of the geological survey was asked?" "The possibilities are that we would not be able to come across them in the vast northern country," was the answer. "Besides, Mr. Macoun's party has ample provisions." While the party are very possibly frozen in, there are plenty of safe harbourages along the north coast of Canada east of Hudson Bay in which they might have taken refuge when the ice began to close in.

Silver at Port Arthur.

Port Arthur, Dec. 7.—Development work will start immediately upon the find of silver made in the Stewart and Hewitson quarry between the two cities. C. W. Baker, of Denver, has an option from the quarry onwers for sinking a shaft, by which the value of the property will be thoroughly demonstrated.

Geo. Speers & Co.
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